

feeling lonely (in the dark) by pally (palliris)

Series: [do you feel it? \[3\]](#)

Category: Stranger Things (TV 2016)

Genre: Blood, Dissociation, Introspection, M/M, PTSD, Steve needs help, Teeth, but its the 1980s and thats not relevant back then For Them Young Teens, mostly steve

Language: English

Characters: Billy Hargrove, Steve Harrington

Relationships: Billy Hargrove/Steve Harrington

Status: Completed

Published: 2017-11-02

Updated: 2017-11-02

Packaged: 2022-04-02 01:53:55

Rating: Teen And Up Audiences

Warnings: Creator Chose Not To Use Archive Warnings

Chapters: 1

Words: 1,863

Publisher: archiveofourown.org

Summary:

Steve's in the middle of making breakfast when he just-

Stops.

feeling lonely (in the dark)

Author's Note:

hey if u can figure out all the different name associations to all three fic titles then u can request whatever fic u want based on this pairing (tho if its anything abusive m gonna say no) (itll also be canon to this series)

u dont have to read the other parts of the series, but ig its recommended for this one, and then after this is an upcoming fic not from steve or billys perspective!!! (its not nancy, tho, sorry lmao ;/)

comments and kudos rlly appreciated!! yell @ me in the comments, i welcome some good discussion abt these two (im a desperate bic to talk abt them gosh)

Steve's in the middle of making breakfast when he just-

Stops. Everything stills, and it's all because he caught the fucking gleam of a small knife on the counter the wrong way.

(Steve Harrington, taken out by a single paring knife. Real fuckin' great.)

He hasn't felt like this in over two weeks. It's that kind of feeling that pulses in your gut and makes you too sick to even drink water, or else you throw it all back up. That feeling that stays in your head, deep and dark and monstrous, far worse than anything you've ever seen or faced before. Because how else could it get worse?

He sets the glass of water he had just drawn back down onto the counter with an abruptness that makes him startle.

Steve just stares mindlessly out his kitchen window, letting it stew and fester inside of him. It's like those tentacles didn't just get into Byers' system, infecting it and *spreading*, but also his own as well.

There's another storm brewing outside, and he guesses that it's going to be a stupidly wet November, as always. Steve swallows back the

bile in the back of his throat, clasping his hands together in front of his face.

Thoughts and images swirl inside of his head like the screen of a drive-in movie theatre, except it's his memories on display and he's the only person in the audience. It's both his blessing, and his curse; to be alone.

It's not the strength of his body or the will of his mind that gets him upstairs; mainly, it's just the repeating image of his would-be killer, right in his face and never ending, that frightens him into climbing the stairs to his room. When he gets there, Steve pulls out his sock drawer.

With shaky hands he scratches around the wooden cabinet, not really noticing when pairs of socks fall this way and that. Steve bites at his bottom lip when he finally finds what he was looking for.

"Aha!" Steve shouts, just a hint of desperation on the edge of his voice. Steve's mouth twitches at the corner, and he just stares at the small, wooden box. He really, really doesn't want to open it, but he just-

He does.

Steve closes his eyes briefly against a sudden swell of tears, but he holds it back because he has thicker skin than that. Feelings, not so much.

"C'mon, Harrington," he murmurs, so fucking loud in the empty room and the rain softly pitter-pattering outside his window. It sort of sounds like someone he's glad isn't here right now, but definitely fucking *wants* here. "Come *on*."

Steve opens his eyes.

He doesn't know if he was expecting something different, because all that sit in the box are two sets of teeth, four in total but too long and too sharp and glinting in the soft lamplight. Steve wishes he could stop the subtle shake of his hand as he picks them out of the velvety encasing, but doesn't really know how.

The weight of them in his hand keep him grounded, mostly. Remind him of what's real, and what isn't, even when he can't tear the visions from his eyes. The door behind him creaks with the air from the ventilation, and Steve doesn't even move. He's frozen in time, just like his memories.

Steve stares at them, there. He had taken them from the monster Dustin had stored in the Byers' fridge before anyone could think to bury the thing, and he can't quite tell if it was good thing or not yet. He thinks that they might've learned about this sort of thing in health class, very briefly, about how holding on can be healthy, but that doing it too tightly can consume you.

And looking down at the teeth, Steve can say with full certainty that they are absolutely tearing him apart.

Taking a deep, shaky breath and clutching his fist around the pearly whites, Steve hisses as they cut into his palm. The slight twinge of pain in his hand is still immeasurable when compared to the screaming inside of his head, so he just shakes it off.

Placing the box on his bedside table and glancing at the clock to make sure his parents aren't going to be back anytime soon, Steve leaves his room. The walk to the bathroom is short, so he doesn't have much time to categorize his thoughts before he's already there.

There's a small moment where he messes up and allows himself to look at the mirror, and for a second it doesn't look like his reflection. It's just red and black and abyssal. Fucking christ.

He turns on the faucet and tries not to pace while it warms up. When it's been a few minutes, he checks it again and finds it scorching hot. Good.

Chucking his clothes off of his body and throwing them into the corner, Steve draws back the shower curtain. The water draws down with a steady tempo, one that makes his mind go all sorts of blank and fuzzy.

It's too hot; way too warm for him when he's already too cold, but he just lets it wash over his hair and eyelids and lips, sloping into his

mouth. Tastes bitter on his tongue. Steve fully under the spray and just lets it all wash over him, like he thinks it'll wash away his sins.

Tilting his head back into the water, Steve is so acutely aware of every pressing scrape the teeth are making in his slipper palm that he can practically feel them clawing into his skin, trying to get out.

(It's a bit empowering, holding the fucking things like that. Steve hates feeling powerful, because he knows just how much that can fuck up your mind even more. But for this, he makes a stone-cold exception.)

He can feel his skin slowly turning red and aching with intensity, but he lets it all blister on. Crouches down under the spray, opening up his eyes and watching the flow go down the drain. Steve doesn't know how long he stays there, free arm wrapped around his legs and feet shivering despite how fucking hot everything is.

His mind stays blank. It's actually quite refreshing, because when the water turns slightly dark and muddied, he can't really think of anything else but that. Steve's hair falls limply in front of his face when he bends down further, the teeth dropping onto the space in front of him with a small clatter that seems so, so far away.

They stare at him, down there. Steve likes crouching above them, but he still feels rough. Exposed. Vulnerable.

Wishing he could say something and have it be any shred of meaningful, Steve just stares at them. The color of the water seems to grow darker and deeper as he remains silent, as if showing him the consequences of his inaction.

Steve knows it isn't real-

(It's not real, not real, nothing this fucked up could ever be real; who is Steve fucking kidding, all he has to do is run, run, run and maybe that'll become true-)

It's really, truly not real, but he just-

(It's not fucking just you anymore, Harrington, get your grip together, because people are depending on you to come through, to protect them-)

Steve's-

(How can I protect others if I can't even fucking protect myself-)

"...rrington? Hairy Harrington? Steve? Steve-o?"

Steve's fucking clueless.

"You doin' alright in there, Harrington? Front door was unlocked," Billy's voice filters through the door, then just the curtains because yeah, no, Steve forgot to lock that too. Fucking surprise. "Steve?"

Steve knows he must look fucking psychotic, crouched down in a bathtub with the overhead faucet running and teeth laid out in front of him like some sick memorial. Though there's not much he can do when his muscles are frozen, screaming and screeching when he even thinks to move them.

Because his episodes never last more than an hour or two. He had originally stolen the teeth to be some representation of how he defeated the monster under the bed, or some bullshit. Then, it had turned into something much more mental, and Steve knows it's not okay. *He's* not okay.

"You need some help gettin' out of there?" Billy asks, and *god*, because it's exactly what Steve needed to hear but needed to stay away from. There's a note of playfulness in Billy's voice that hasn't soured; banter, but not a jab at Steve. Not really ever, now. "Steve?"

Steve knows he's pretty fucked when the curtains draw back and he still hasn't moved. Must figure that his eyes look dead and lifeless, body weak and terribly unconcealed. It's the most open he's ever felt to anyone, like he's just some gaping, festering wound and Billy's the treatment.

Billy doesn't touch him. Doesn't do anything, really, for a long minute. Just. Stands there.

Steve licks the top of his lip; the first movement he's been able to make in what feels like eternity. It kickstarts the rest of his body, and then his mind is going a mile a minute, water slowly cools back down from a red and into the clear stream it should be.

A breath, then two. In and out.

He can't speak, so when he opens to say something, his mouth clicks back down with a snap. His teeth rub together unpleasantly, and he swallows back the fear and relief in his throat. Billy just continues to stand there, and then he doesn't.

The boy moves to the shower faucet and turns it off. Grabs a towel from under the sink like he owns the place and uses his free hand to ease over the rim of the tub. Crouches behind Steve and presses the cloth to his hair.

They stay silent, like that. It's peaceful against the clamor and power struggle going on inside his mind.

He helps Steve out of the bath tub. Lets Steve pick up the teeth, even. They don't seem to fit as well inside the palm of his hand like they did before, though.

They still don't talk when Steve puts them back in their casing, closing it and hearing the once-satisfying snap, the one that told him that everything was over, he could go back to being *Steve* again but now just feels like a death bell-

"Okay?" Billy asks, and Steve can't do anything else but nod.

They don't talk.

(They will, eventually, when two days have passed and Steve finds whatever courage is still lurking around inside of him, relaying information that he has no right to tell, but Billy *believes* him, believes the fucking nightmare of a story, but not just a story because it was Steve's *life*.)

(They also dig the dead monster back up a week later, and bury the teeth back alongside with it. Steve feels more free than he has in his whole entire fucking life, tucked neatly under Billy's arm as they sit side by side and watch the moon crawl back up into the sky like a wayward traveler.)